AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in this application.

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A method comprising:

providing a tool comprising a hollow body including a circumferential wall having a distal end, the tool also comprising an extension that protrudes from the circumferential wall beyond the distal end and forms a platform that is open in a radial direction to form a radial direction opening and in an axial direction to form an axial direction opening that is substantially transverse to the radial direction opening, the platform having a side surface facing in the radial direction,

providing an expandable structure;

introducing the tool and the expandable structure into a bone having an interior volume occupied, at least in part, by cancellous bone;

positioning the platform near the expandable structure, with the side surface of the platform located between the expandable structure and a first region of the cancellous bone which is not to be compressed;

securing the expandable structure to the platform, in a manner to maintain a predetermined rotational orientation between the expandable structure and the platform, **utilizing a notch formed in the side surface of the platform and configured to interlockingly receive a corresponding portion of the expandable structure**;

forming a cavity in a second region of cancellous bone by expanding the expandable structure against the side surface of the platform with the platform serving as a barrier to induce the expandable structure to expand radially away from the side surface of the platform to compress the second region of the cancellous bone, while the first region of the cancellous bone remains substantially uncompressed, and

introducing a filler material into the cavity.

2 – 3. (Canceled).

4. (Previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein during the expanding the expandable structure displaces at least a portion of a cortical bone within the bone.

5 – 11. (Canceled)

12. (Previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the filler material comprises bone cement.

13 – 22. (Canceled).

23. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 1, wherein the tool and the expandable structure are introduced into a vertebral body having an interior volume occupied, at least in part, by cancellous bone.

24. (Previously presented) The method according to claim 1, wherein the extension protrudes from the distal end of the hollow body from only a circumferential portion of the circumferential wall of the hollow body.

25. (Currently Amended) ~~The method according to claim 1,~~ **A method comprising:**

providing a tool comprising a hollow body including a circumferential wall having a distal end, the tool also comprising an extension that protrudes from the circumferential wall beyond the distal end and forms a platform that is open in a radial direction to form a radial direction opening and in an axial direction to form an axial direction opening that is substantially transverse to the radial direction opening, the platform having a side surface facing in the radial direction;

providing an expandable structure;

introducing the tool and the expandable structure into a bone having an interior volume occupied, at least in part, by cancellous bone;

positioning the platform near the expandable structure, with the side surface of the platform located between the expandable structure and a first region of the cancellous bone which is not to be compressed;

securing the expandable structure to the platform in a manner to maintain a predetermined rotational orientation between the expandable structure and the platform;

forming a cavity in a second region of cancellous bone by expanding the expandable structure against the side surface of the platform with the platform serving as a barrier to induce the expandable structure to expand radially away from the side surface of the platform to compress the second region of the cancellous bone, while the first region of the cancellous bone remains substantially uncompressed, and

introducing a filler material into the cavity,

wherein forming the cavity in the second region of cancellous bone includes expanding the expandable structure in the axial direction through the axial direction opening of the platform such that the expandable structure expands in the axial direction beyond a distal end of the platform.